



## State of Connecticut

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

**REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN HARDING, JR.**  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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**MEMBER**  
ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE  
FINANCE, REVENUE, AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Public Health Committee  
March 7, 2016

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 353 – AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ABUSE

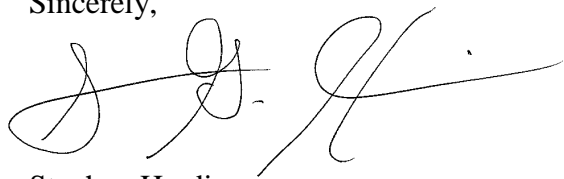
Co-Chairs Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter; Vice Chairs Senator Crisco, Representative Riley; Ranking Members Senator Markley, Representative Srinivasan; and esteemed members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of 353 – An Act Concerning Opioid Abuse. The bill seeks to add members to the Connecticut Alcohol and Drug Policy Council and specify requirements for the council's state-wide plan, allow for the provision of auricular acupuncture services outside of private, freestanding facilities and to allow primary care providers and licensed alcohol and drug counselors to provide certain services relating to patients' substance abuse.

This bill is of personal significance to myself and those throughout my district. Over the past few years, I have lost some of my lifelong friends to opioid addiction. This is an issue that myself, and others throughout my community, are committed to addressing and hopefully, one day, resolving.

I believe this bill is a good first step in addressing this crisis. I would ask this committee to consider addressing regulations surrounding Detox Facilities. One of my friends, Vincent Mitchell, Jr., passed due to opioid addiction. Unfortunately, Vincent was able to leave a detox facility and purchase heroin which ultimately ended his life. Speaking with his father, to make this tragedy even worse, staff at this facility did not find Vincent's body until days after his passing. I would ask this committee to consider legislation which would prevent this from occurring in any of our facilities throughout the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Harding', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Harding  
State Representative – 107<sup>th</sup> District  
Brookfield • Bethel • Danbury